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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VATICAN 003823

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE (MENNUTI), NEA, DRL/IRF AND EUR/RUS
HELSINKI PASS ST PETERSBURG
MOSCOW PASS TO VLADIVOSTOK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/31/2012

TAGS: [IS PHUM PREL PGOV KIRF RS PHUM PREL PGOV KIRF RS PHUM PREL PGOV KIRF RS VT VTIS VTIS VTIS](#)
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER TAURAN ON MIDDLE EAST AND RUSSIA:
SKEPTICAL OF SHARON; PERPLEXED BY MOSCOW

REF: A. A) VATICAN 3503

[1](#)B. B) VATICAN 3527

[1](#)C. C) VATICAN 3492

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PAGE 02 VATICA 03823 01 OF 02 021542Z

CLASSIFIED BY: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES D. BRENT HARDT.
REASONS 1.5 (B) AND D).

[1](#)1. SUMMARY: (C) VATICAN FOREIGN MINISTER ARCHBISHOP

JEAN-LOUIS TAURAN TOLD CHARGE JULY 25 THAT THE HOLY SEE REMAINS SKEPTICAL OF PRIME MINISTER SHARON'S WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT A POLITICAL SOLUTION, AND VIEWS THE JULY 22 ISRAELI ACTION IN GAZA AS EVIDENCE OF SHARON'S PREFERENCE FOR A MILITARY SOLUTION. TAURAN WAS EVEN-HANDED, CONDEMNING PALESTINIAN ACTIONS, AND EXPRESSING DOUBT THAT EITHER SHARON OR ARAFAT WOULD BE ABLE TO SURMOUNT THEIR PREDILECTIONS AND TAKE THE STEPS NEEDED TO MOVE TOWARD A PEACE PROCESS. FOR THAT REASON, THE VATICAN CONTINUES TO FAVOR THE CONVENING OF A PEACE CONFERENCE AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY. THE HOLY SEE ALSO BELIEVES THAT SOME FORM OF INTERNATIONAL FORCE IS NEEDED TO SEPARATE THE TWO SIDES AND PROVIDE A BREATHING SPACE TO DAMPEN CURRENT HIGH EMOTIONS. TAURAN REITERATED THE HOLY SEE'S MOUNTING CONCERN FOR THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT'S RECENT ACTIONS TO DENY VISAS TO ARCHBISHOP MAZUR AND TO RESTRICT VISAS FOR OTHER CATHOLIC PRIESTS. ARCHBISHOP TRICARICO, WHO MOST CLOSELY TRACKS RUSSIAN ISSUES IN THE HOLY SEE, INDICATED THAT NOW IS THE TIME FOR UNEQUIVOCAL INDICATIONS OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR GREATER RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN RUSSIA. END SUMMARY.

SHARON SEEKING MILITARY SOLUTION?

[1](#)2. (C) ARCHBISHOP JEAN-LOUIS TAURAN PROVIDED CHARGE WITH THE
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[1](#)3. (C) BECAUSE OF THE INTRANSIGENCE OF BOTH SHARON AND ARAFAT, THE HOLY SEE BELIEVES THE PARTIES NEED THE IMPETUS OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO HELP THEM MOVE BEYOND THE CURRENT STALEMATE. TAURAN ALSO BELIEVES THAT SOME FORM OF AN INTERNATIONAL FORCE IS NECESSARY TO PREVENT THE TIT-FOR-TAT CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND GIVE BOTH SIDES THE BREATHING SPACE THEY NEED TO DAMPEN EMOTIONS AND THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT A LASTING POLITICAL SOLUTION. CHARGE OUTLINED TO TAURAN THE U.S. APPROACH, STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVING THE SECURITY SITUATION AND THEN BEGINNING PARALLEL WORK ON PALESTINIAN REFORMS AND IMPROVEMENTS IN PALESTINIAN CONDITIONS WHILE WORKING TOWARD THE PRESIDENT'S VISION OF TWO STATES WITHIN THREE YEARS. TAURAN, WHO HAD JUST RETURNED
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FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER DE VILLEPIN IN FRANCE, WELCOMED THE CURRENT DIRECTION, BUT ALSO EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING URGENT STEPS TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR PALESTINIANS.

POPE STILL WAITING TO HEAR FROM PUTIN

[1](#)4. (C) AS REPORTED REFS (B) AND (C), POPE JOHN PAUL II HAD WRITTEN TO PRESIDENT PUTIN OVER TWO MONTHS AGO SEEKING CLARIFICATION OF RUSSIA'S DENIAL OF ENTRY TO POLISH ARCHBISHOP MAZUR FOR THE IRKUTSK DIOCESE. TAURAN INDICATED

NOTE: NOT PASSED TO ABOVE ADDRESSEE(S)

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ACTION EUR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 AMAD-00 ACQ-00 CIAE-00 INL-00 DODE-00
DS-00 FBIE-00 VC-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 LAB-01 VCE-00
NEA-00 NSAE-00 PC-01 IRM-00 SS-00 DSCC-00 DRL-02
NFAT-00 SAS-00 /004W

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P 021409Z AUG 02
FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN
TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ALMATY PRIORITY
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"ALL WE WERE ASKING FOR WAS AN EXPLANATION OF WHY BISHOP

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MAZUR WAS DENIED ENTRY INTO RUSSIA," TAURAN NOTED, "NOTHING
MORE." TAURAN REITERATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR PRESIDENT
BUSH'S EARLIER WILLINGNESS TO RAISE THE POPE'S CONCERNS ABOUT
THIS CASE WITH PRESIDENT PUTIN, AND SUGGESTED THAT ADDITIONAL
ENCOURAGEMENT MIGHT BE NEEDED.

15. (C) ARCHBISHOP TRICARICO, THE VATICAN'S TOP RUSSIA EXPERT
WAS MORE INSISTENT THAT OUTSIDE PRESSURE WOULD BE NECESSARY
TO FOCUS THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. TRICARICO LAMENTED THAT RUSSIA'S RECENT
PRESSURE AGAINST THE CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM MORE
BROADLY APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN SUBMERGED BY BROADER WESTERN
PRIORITIES IN SEEKING RUSSIAN COOPERATION IN THE WAR ON
TERRORISM. HE BELIEVED, HOWEVER, THAT THE SITUATION WAS AT A
CRITICAL JUNCTURE, AND THAT RUSSIA NEEDED TO HEAR A LOUD AND
CONSISTENT MESSAGE FROM THE U.S. AND EUROPE THAT RUSSIA
NEEDED TO RESPECT RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS IF IT WANTED TO
INTEGRATE MORE CLOSELY WITH THE WEST.

16. (C) TRICARICO EXPRESSED PLEASURE WITH A RECENT PROVINCIAL
COURT DECISION IN THE SIBERIAN CITY OF MAGADAN ALLOWING AN
ALASKAN PRIEST TO REMAIN AS PASTOR OF A CATHOLIC PARISH IN
THAT REMOTE CITY. FATHER MICHAEL SHIELDS, PASTOR NATIVITY OF
JESUS PARISH SINCE 1994, HAD BEEN CHALLENGED BY THE
PROVINCIAL MINISTRY OF JUSTICE ON THE GROUNDS THAT FOREIGNERS
CANNOT BE PASTORS IN RUSSIA. THE COURT TOOK ONLY 10 MINUTES
TO DECIDE IN SHIELD'S FAVOR. THE CASE COULD HAVE A POSITIVE
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COMMENT

17. (C) TAURAN REITERATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE
OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW MIDDLE EAST EVENTS WITH THE PRESIDENT
AND SECRETARY POWELL DURING THEIR MAY VISIT TO THE VATICAN,
AND REAFFIRMED HIS DESIRE TO STAY IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE
U.S. ON DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE QUARTET AIMED AT ADVANCING
THE PRESIDENT'S VISION FOR PEACE.

18. (C) (COMMENT CONTINUED) ON THE CHURCH IN RUSSIA, THE
VATICAN'S LEVEL OF CONCERN IS CLEARLY MOUNTING, AS THE ISSUE
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OFFICIALS. THE HOLY SEE SEEMS AT A LOSS FOR HOW TO PROCEED
-- GIVEN THAT PRESIDENT PUTIN APPEARS UNWILLING TO RESPOND TO
THE POPE -- AND IS CLEARLY SIGNALING ITS INTEREST IN
ADDITIONAL SIGNS OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN
RUSSIA AND SPECIFICALLY FOR CLARIFICATION OF THE VISA
SITUATION FOR PRIESTS. WE WOULD WELCOME EMBASSY MOSCOW'S
ASSESSMENT OF WHAT IS BEHIND THE CURRENT STONEWALLING AND HOW

BEST TO ENGAGE THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT ON THIS ISSUE.
HARDT

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ACTION EUR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 AMAD-00 ACQ-00 CIAE-00 INL-00 DODE-00
DS-00 FBIE-00 VC-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 LAB-01 VCE-00
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ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
	DS-00	EAP-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01
	VCE-00	NEA-00	DCP-01	NSAE-00	PC-01	SS-00	DSCC-00
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